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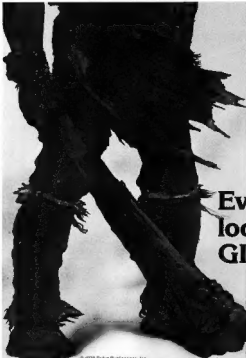
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CONTENTS

Heavy Metal Vol. 11 No. 8 December, 1979



Midnight Feast, by Reveille , 6
Combining Out the Kinks, by Stephen Stiles , 8
Suburban Scenes, by Caza , 9
After the Fall, by Serge Clerc , 17
Giants, by Julik Heller , Carolyn Serace , and Juan Wijngaard , Devised by David Larkin , 22
Santa Claus vs. S.P.I.D.E.R., by Harlan Ellison , illustration by Gahan Wilson , 26
Work and Win, by Stephen Stiles , 33
Rowf, by Richard Carbin , 34
On the Side of the Highway, by Harold , 44
Galactic Geographic, by Karl Koford , 48
Fomalhaut, by Montxo Algora , 50
Pau Pele Pau Mano, by Trina Robbins , 59
A Tale of Christmas, by Moebius , 66
Gnomes: The True, Inside Story, by Luck and Flaw , 72
December 24th, 11:55 P.M., by Voss , 77
Slim Kentucky, by Luc Cornillon , 81
Christmas Carol, by Arthur Suydam , 87
...Thirty-three... 3
Chain Mail, 4
Front cover, He's Comin' to Town, by Richard Lon Cohen and John Townley
Back cover, Sweet Dreams, by Thomas Warkentin

"Midnight Feast," by Reveille, "Suburban Scenes," by Caza, "After the Fall," by Clerc, "On the Side of the Highway," by Harold, "A Tale of Christmas," by Montxo, December 24th, 11:55 P.M., by Voss, and "Slim Kentucky," by Luc Cornillon are all from Metal Market, copyright © 1979, 1977, 1978, 1979 Metal Market is published by L.P. Editors, Los Angeles Associates, Paris. Reprinted by permission.

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...Thirty-three...

Illustration by Curtis King

Well, here it is again: That Season. The streets are (or soon will be) filling up with slush and shoppers frantic to find That Perfect Present for You Know Who, the merchants are all geared up for what they know is the month that will either make or break their year, the media are increasing the crescendo of their outpourings — records, movies, books — and the seasonal insanity is upon us once again.

Christmas.

Who are we to fly in the face of tradition? We've assembled some Xmas goodies for your heavy metal stocking — check them out: Harlan rings the changes on lovable ol' Santa in his inimitable Ellison way; the French, always at their most engaging at such a sentimental time as this, give us "After the Fall," "December 24th," "Slim Kentucky," and "A Tale of Christmas," the latter by the incomparable Moebius, taking a break from his Airtight Garage to celebrate the season. For those who recall the Gnomes of a couple seasons back, we've provided a visit with their poorer relations; and to keep up to date, we've sampled this season's follow-up to the Gnomes and Fairies — the Giants. To wrap up this package of Xmas gifts, Arthur Suydam gives us his "Christmas Carol."

But let's not get carried away here with seasonal joy. In a more secular mood, we've brought back Trina and we introduce Steve Stiles, both perhaps better known from the "underground" comic. And next month we unveil some brand-new surprises — what better way to celebrate the New Year?

The Eds.



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SUBSCRIPTIONS: Published monthly by HM Communications, Inc., 635 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022 \$17.00 paid annual subscription, \$25.00 paid two-

year subscription and \$32.00 paid three-year subscription in territorial U.S. Additional \$5.00 for Canada, Mexico, and foreign. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and additional mailing offices.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Subscriber please send change of address to Circulation Manager, Heavy Metal Magazine, 635 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022. Allow six weeks for change. **POSTMASTER:** Please mail form 3579 notice to Circulation Manager, Heavy Metal Magazine, 635 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022.

ADVERTISING OFFICES: New York: Advertising Manager, Heavy Metal Magazine, 635 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022 (212) 688-4070. Chicago: William H. Sanders, Midwest Advertising Director, 395 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60601 (312) 346-7145. West Coast: Lowell Fox and Associates, 16200 Ventura Boulevard, Encino, Cal. 91436 (213) 996-2952. Southern Offices: Brown & Company, Heritage Tower, Suite 407, 8665 Roswell Road, NE, Atlanta, Ga. 30328 (404) 252-9620.

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Dear Chain Mail:

Your special H.P. Lovecraft issue was superb! Perfect for Halloween. It came as a complete surprise. I have enjoyed your magazine since the first issue, often with somewhat mixed emotions, but I never dreamed you would come up with a Lovecraft issue. I love Lovecraft (no pun intended) and the adapted version of "The Dunwich Horror"

was magnificent!

Your editorial was a bit confusing, indicating that *HM's* American publishers do not share "Froggies" enthusiasm for HPL. ("Clumsy and overblown style"? Maybe, but who cares?) I don't know everything about him, though, so what is "Bombadil, The Red Book, and Smugel"? I thought I had read all of his tales, and I can't recall the mention of any of them. (Azathoth is, of course, the blind, idiot god that "blasphemes and bubbles at the center of infinity," a figure of speech for nuclear chaos.)

I especially enjoyed the excerpt from "The Cry of Cthulu." What a pity the rest won't be available for two years.

Bill Cox

Lawrenceville, Ga.

P.S.: The Necronomicon is not fictional. I

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1. TITLE OF PUBLICATION: Heavy Metal.
2. DATE OF FILING: September 12, 1979.
3. FREQUENCY OF ISSUE: Monthly. A No. of issues published annually—12.
4. Annual subscription price—\$17.00.
5. LOCATION OF KNOWN OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 635 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022.
6. LOCATION OF THE HEADQUARTERS OR GENERAL BUSINESS OFFICES OF THE PUBLISHERS: 635 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022.
7. NAMES AND COMPLETE ADDRESSES OF PUBLISHER, EDITOR AND MANAGING EDITOR: Publisher: Len Mager, 635 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022.
Editor: Ted White, 635 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022.
Managing Editor: Julie Sammons, 635 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022.
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11. EXTENT AND NATURE OF CIRCULATION: AVERAGE NO. COPIES EACH ISSUE DURING PRECEDING 12 MONTHS: A. Total no. copies printed (Net Press Run): 345,830. B. Paid circulation: 1. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, and counter sales: 179,372. 2. Mail subscriptions: 33,842. C. Total paid circulation (Sum of 10B1 and 10B2): 203,015. D. Free distribution by mail, carrier, or other means: samples, complimentary, and other free copies: 1,115. E. Total distribution (Sum of 10C and 10D): 205,430. F. Copies not distributed: 1. Office use, left over, unsold, applied after printing: 1,246. 2. Returns from news agents: 138,154. G. Total (Sum of E, F1 and 2—should equal net press run shown in A): 345,830. ACTUAL NO. COPIES OF SINGLE ISSUES PUBLISHED NEAREST TO FILING DATE: A. Total no. copies printed (Net Press Run): 341,900. B. Paid circulation: 1. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, and counter sales: 153,113. 2. Mail subscriptions: 30,862. C. Total paid circulation (Sum of 10B1 and 10B2): 183,975. D. Free distribution by mail, carrier, or other means: samples, complimentary, and other free copies: 1,411. E. Total distribution (Sum of 10C and 10D): 185,387. F. Copies not distributed: 1. Office use, left over, unsold, applied after printing: 1,129. 2. Returns from news agents: 142,240. G. Total (Sum of E, F1 and 2—should equal net press run shown in A): 341,900.
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George S. Agosti
Senior Vice-President

own a copy published in English by Schlangkraft Inc., in 1977, courtesy of a "nameless monk." Ironically, it has been dedicated to Aleister Crowley instead of HPL.

Retard that editorial and it may become clear to you that "Bombadil, The Red Book, and Smugel" were references to Tolkien rather than Lovecraft. —HM.

Continued on page 32

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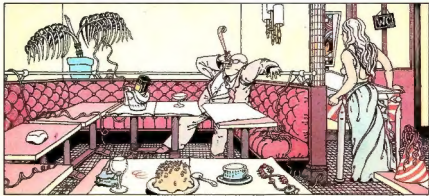
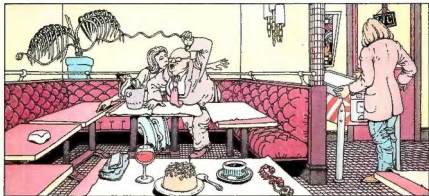
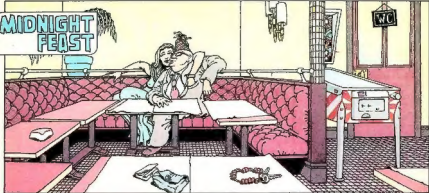
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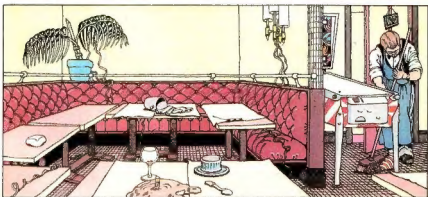
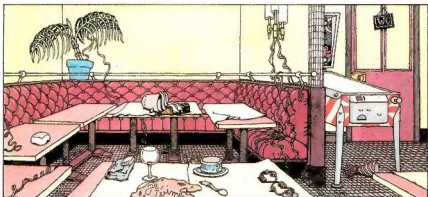
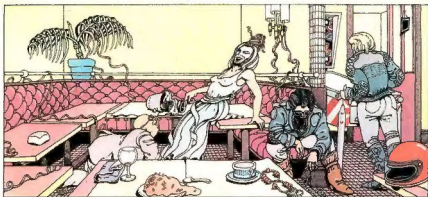
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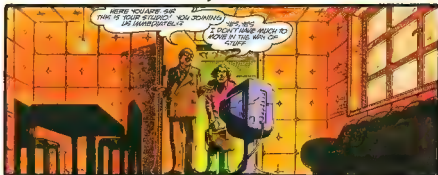




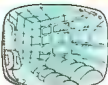
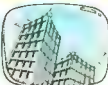
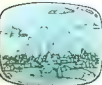
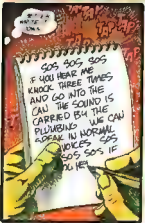


Suburban Scenes: Welcome to Cityville 2

by Caza



Good evening consumers and
consumeresses. Tonight on
"News You Couldn't Live With-
out" we invite you to discover
with us Cityville
Rufus
Agnostyle, Junior reporting



A few minutes to the south of center Cityville a new city has grown up in the past few months Cityville 2 on a piece of land once occupied by some farmers who clung to the soil and the past and by some summer folk whose cottages were badly built

and in poor taste. Now elegant buildings stand there—glass, concrete, steel, glass, sober lines powerful clean—a city without shadows a city radiant in every sense of the word. Though seemingly translucent and shining as mirrors, these

buildings do not lack variety and intimacy inside where apartments range in size from studios to five rooms all carefully soundproofed so that each tenant can maintain his sense of independence and his own tastes. But Cityville 2 can claim to be

original on other grounds as well for it was not created by some promoter but by the state itself, guided by the dynamic minister of social security Sir Mark Michaels. Mmmmm yes. For several years as you know Cityville has faced serious social problems, as have its suburbs



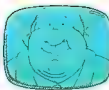
You mean *stupid*?
Yes, possibly. For some time now we have used all available means to rid our neighborhood of these cankers, these infectious *sexual* Criville 2, in particular has addressed itself to the problem of relocating rose dry mmm juuuuhh

those unfortunate foreigners who come here to do the work that our own people find too alienating to do.
But that isn't CV 2's only objective, is it?

No, it certainly isn't. The issue, in the final analysis, is a much more serious problem, that of nonconformity in general. There are, in the real world, so many people of all ages, from all walks of life—who fail to adapt the aged, addicts

hecks from the sticks, the hand icapped jazz musicians, homosexuals and fuc ear types, ecologists, pacifists, former convicts, psychiatrists, etc.





You're talking about those on the fringe, aren't you? Yes, that's what they are! A very small minority really! They certainly are! But one that is still worthy of consideration—yes they need help being relocated in our society.

And so that's why there's CV 2 Minister Michael! Ah yes, there they find decent housing, hygienic conditions and the comforts that all consumers have a right to: TV incinerators, electrically-run hairbrushes, heating, and all the services and

installations indispensable to urban life: air within walking distance, banks, supermarkets, delicatessens, corner stores, banks, rehabilitation centers, banks, public baths. Are these showers in the apartment?

Oh, no. Well, what really matters in CV 2 is security! Ah, yes! Tell us about security there, Minister Michael! I'm very pleased with it, must say. We have had wonderful results with it!



IT'S TRUE, THE DOOR WON'T OPEN, AND IT'S ARMOR-PLATED, SO WE ARE PRISONERS, AREN'T WE?

JUST LIKE I SAID, BUDDY!



BUT WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT? WE CAN'T JUST STAY HERE WITHOUT EVEN TRYING.

WELL, I WAS A TUNNEL ONCE.



FROM THE SIXTH FLOOR? THAT MUST BE SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT.

YOU'RE TELLING ME, DRIVING THROUGH PRESTIGE-PRICED CON- LACTE WITH A "WAGON"? DO YOU HAVE ANY TOOLS?



NO, WELL, A RAZOR.

WELL, THAT'S A RAZOR! WHEN IT'S LATE, WE'LL TALK SOME MORE TO HONORARY.



OK, TEL SOMEBODY! SWOOSH!

OH, SORRY! JUST A MINUTE, I'VE BEEN HERE FOR



TEEN!



THAT'S GOOD, OR NOT?

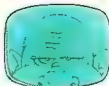


THAT WINDOW WAS A HANDFUL, AND IT'S NOT SHOWN! WELL,

I'VE JUST



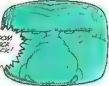
AS OFFERED OUT.



Actually it was a question of solving the problem of violence in the suburban setting. At night rapists, escaped beasts, street gangs, car thieves and hoodlums ran rampant in the streets. It was of prime importance to

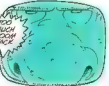


protect the pigs, mmh, the... mmh, mmh, mean the residents of Cityville 2. Yes, protect them from the various dangers looming about outside. That's why the pigs, mmh, the city is surrounded by an iron wall fifty feet high.



BOOM
BACK
JACK!

around which yes a wire not barbed no, no, but electrified yes. And then at the four corners of the city, there are what would you call them? Watch towers. You know with projectors. Do you mean observation towers?



BOOM
MUCH
BOOM
JACK!

Yes. That's just the word I'm looking for. There's also a mine field 150 yards deep running around the circumference of the wall. And then inside and out, day and night, patrols of armed vigilantes, accompanied by police dogs.



DON'T
MOVE!

SHIT



HEY IT'S
THE NEW TIG-
ANT IN ALBAST-
MENT 7



So if I understand clearly people don't get out? No, of course they do. They go off to their jobs every day in central Cityville. On the contrary it's a very important aspect of their social reintegration! The same has created this in all areas of them.



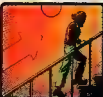
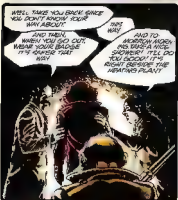
In businesses sell mines nuclear waste disposal administrative jobs duplicity agencies there's something for every type. But sent more some risk of their not returning home at night? Of their leaving?

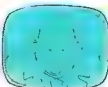
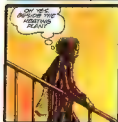


You know the only exit from CV 2 leads to the station. All trains go to central Cityville, and there. The streets the subway you know how it looks a quadrangle! It's not easy to escape in such a place! type



Only if they are wearing their badges, you know the two V's (as in Cityville 2) embroidered on a yellow background. It can be seen from quite a distance! They find themselves automatically heading toward the station, and then, they're back in Cityville 2!





And there they find the cozy security of their own homes with all the modern conveniences the TV kitchen, public baths, what? Aren't there showers or baths in the apartments?

No. There're public baths. That is for economic reasons the ovens, ermm the furnaces in the heating plants are fed by the residents themselves. I mean their sacrament, waste products of the

population noise! Besides, that's why the gas men I mean, the public baths ARE located next to the ovens, excuse me, the furnaces of the urban heating plant. So Mr. Kruger is that the solution?

Yes yes, would say the final solution! Thank you, Mark Michaels, cabinet minister—minister for social security. Thank you.

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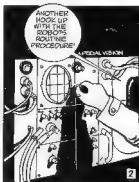
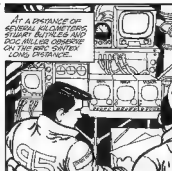
AFTER THE FALL

STORY AND ART: SERGE CLERC



A RUSSIAN OUTPOST SOMEWHERE
IN THE SNOWED-IN DUNES TO THE SOUTH
OF SMOLENSK. ALL HAS BEEN CALM FOR
THREE DAYS. THERE'S NOTHING TO DO
EXCEPT WATCH THE VIDEOS OF
COMRADE VLASSOV FROM THE
LENINGRAD POLITICAL BUREAU.

AND RELAX IN THE
SOLARIUM. SOMETIMES,
A QUICK BLANCE INTO
THE ROBOT CONTROL
ROOM, AN EASY JOB.





THE DAYS
PASS, THE
TENSION
SLOWLY
MOUNTS
AT THE
AMERICAN
POST





OF COURSE
WE BROKE OR
DERS' BUT THE
ROBOTS ARE
A... UNDER
OUR CONTROL

FORGET
ABOUT IT
WHERE'S
KOMA, SK12

WTF
WTF THE RUS
CAN WOMAN IN
THE SOLARIUM
NOW YOU SEE
WHAT I'VE BEEN
TRYING TO TELL
YOU

YEAH
LOOK WHO'S
PROMISING
US A
MERRY
CHRISTMAS

KRAAAAAAAA

END

ART BY
MICHAEL
GOSWAMI
CLERIC

NOV. 78

COMMUNICATION CONTROL LEAVING CONCERNING SMOLENSK REGULATION SO. SUCCESS OF THE
AUTODESTRUCTION PROGRAM OF ROBOT-POUL LIL TOPCHECK. PROBABLE EXTENSION INTO THE FRENCH
SECTOR REGULATION 78.

giants

Illustrated by
Julek Heller, Carolyn Scrase, and Juan
Wijngaard. Devised by David Larkin.

The following is
an excerpt from *Giants*, published and sold by Henry Adams, Inc. Copyright ©
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Traces

Rocks and boulders play an exceedingly important part in giant life. According to size (either that of the giant or the boulder) they were playthings, weapons, means of camouflage, seats, quivers, bows, mallets, and, on a more mundane level, building materials. Remnants of giant activity of this sort are still to be seen scattered across the length and breadth of the British Isles as well as in innumerable other places in the world. Apart from all the known giant "remains" dotting the country side, there is considerable evidence of giant presence for those observant enough to find it. Obviously, some knowledge of giant ploys (such as self camouflage) is useful to the would-be tracker.





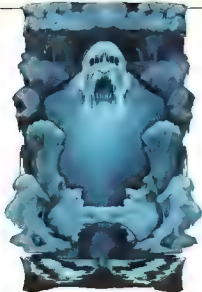
Bodies

Giants are characterized by rather useful physical features. Their arms are disproportionately long, often reaching just below their knees. This not only aids balance, but also enables giants to feel objects concealed by their protruding stomachs. The upper regions of their bodies are generally densely forested with hair, to aid survival in the damp swiring mists of the northern lowlands.

Clothing

The big men would tear holes along the edge of the fabric and thread a length of begged, borrowed, or stolen cord. Finally he would knot the ends together or loop them around the waist. This tunic style was often ornamented with a ripped hem or the addition of decoration such as a brightly hung clothline or a wagon wheel. Warmth came from the animal fur draped cape style around the shoulders, and giants soon astutely noticed that multiple layers of clothing acted as excellent insulation against unfavorable weather conditions.





A Frost Giant



A Giant Pastime

Pilfering was a common pastime among the lazier giants. An unwary shepherd could only too easily—and too late—notice a huge arm popping out of a mountain cave to grab a sheep, cow, or tasty looking man.

Far be it from me to stir af, you somewhat sacker out of your shoes-style apathy as you lie there fat and dulled from ten years of Twinkies and Pringles. Farrah's nipples and Burt Reynolds's car crashes. Gerry Ford's and Jimmy Carter's soft *hummung* stumble into stagflation. Balthasar Pondeosa and the video clone-chiklen of Gilgan's Island getting your nearish Teflon'd so you can snort greater quantities of coke without your snouts col'uping. Far be it from me to stir any uneasiness in you, but once again fulfilling my role as the Specter at the Banquet, I take pardonable pleasure in assuring you that you are not safe, i.e. heavymetal babies.

They are still out there, and they still gonna getcha.

So now the heavymetal babies flip up the shades and scan the sunny streets. Who gonna get me? Who's this They-oh-man-Ellison still viewin' loo'ng about?

C'mon, babies, you know who They are.

On this, the tenth anniversary of the first publication of *Santa Claus vs. S.P.I.D.E.R.*, your journal of irrelevance and mine, goodol'rive *Heavy Metal*, has deigned in jam a hot wire into this decade-dead literary measure and give it one more galvanic witch just to remind you that Dow Chemical is now going under the name OPEC—that Ronnie Reagan may look like Dick Tracy's old nemesis Pruneface but he's still creeping toward the presidency—that porn publishers bought out the old *LA Free Press* and then managed to sink it—that Bob Dylan is only two years away from age forty and the new album is so rare even disco dreck sounds *failla brio* by comparison—and *They* are out there waiting to double-team your asses.

This curious concert *Santa as James Bond* was written in the brief time just after King and Jack Kennedy got snuffed. Nixon was put in charge of the madhouse. NASA orbited the Moon. Jackie tied the knot with Onassis. North Korea captured the *Pueblo*, LBJ tossed in the towel. Sirhan bumped off Bobby Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago issued shoot-on-sight orders to his silver-shielded killers. Poor folks founded Resurrection City in DC just to make the point that they were hungry. The Beatles were still making music, and Kubrick threw a good hard fastball called *2001: A Space Odyssey* at every incipient dope fiend looking up for a prearranged, all-expense-paid legions to his/her groovy space.

It was, in short, a hellfire time in American history during which a lot of ravaging assholes like your Faithful Author thought the world was being changed.

But here it is, a mere ten later, and Nixon-Agnew (not to mention Chief Justice Warren E. Burger) have done the r jobs so well, that the great sweeping wad of American Humanity barely twitched as it was taught a lesson in pocketpicking by the oil companies, at something like \$1.10 the gallon.

So here comes Santa again, both guns blazing, to remind you (with some maliciousness on our part) that even though Humphrey, Johnson, and Daley are worm food, even though Spiro is out there making money instead of bad alienation, even though George Wallace got his ball's shot off, even though crazy bugfuck Lester Maddox has returned to his true calling—deep-fry pig fat or whatever—even though Reagan and Nixon seem more lamenable than loaded for bear—even though all the former Attila rippers have been ostensibly defused or parted—even so, as Tom Jefferson is credited with saying (though John Philipot Curran, 1750-81, said it first), eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.

Thus all you darlin' snoozing heavymetal babies, though you think some kinda kosher Zorro is going to emerge from the dustheaps of MIDDLE AMERICA, or maybe the NFL, whose sole purpose in this etern ity is to rescue your humble selves from The Forces of Evil, let me assure you—as Zapata assured the peons: "I we are to believe the screenplay by Sir neck out of Kazan from the mouth of Brando—you've only got yourselves to rely on. And half awake as you are, ain't gonna be no heavy crenking for the footpads to sneak up on you and slit your throats. You simply have got to smarten up and remember this: one cannot see the sea, world afloat that we, through the bottom of a glass of Coors.

Having delivered the Xmas message, and leaving you with Kris Kringle to bolt it down, I will now return to my labors, causing as much trouble as possible foursquare for chaos and anarchy.

Hoping you see the same
Harian Ellison
Christmas '979

SANTA '79

An

Introductory Update a Decade Later



SANTA CLAUS VS. S.P.I.D.E.R.

By Marlan Ellison

ESP I 103

It was half-past September when the red phone rang. Kris moved away from the warm and pliant form into which he had been folded, belly to back, and rubbed a hand across sticky eyes. The phone rang again. He could not make out the tone or the luscious dial of his wristwatch. "What is it, honey?" murmured the blond woman beside him. The phone rang a third time. "Nothing, baby. Go back to sleep," he soothed her. She burrowed deeper under the covers as he reached for the receiver, plucking it out of the cradle in the middle of a fourth impulsive

"Yeah?" His mouth tasted unhappy. A voice on the other end said, "The King of Canaan needs your service."

Kris sat up. "Was a minute. I'll take it on the extension." He described the HOLD button, stopped out of the bed even as he reached the receiver and, naked, padded across the antiseptic bedroom in the dark. He found his way through the hall and into the front office, guiding his passage only by the barest touch of fingertips to walls. He pulled the bronze triangular plaque from the little people away from the wall, spun the dial on the wall safe and pulled it open. The red phone with its complex scrambler attachment lurked in the circular opening.

He punched out code on the scrambler, lifted the receiver, and said, "The King fears the devil, and the devil fears the Cross. Code and counter-code."

Kris: H S P I D E R. " said the voice on the other end.

She: he himself. "Where?"

"The States, Alabama, California, D.C. Tex."

Serious?"

"Serious enough to wait you."

Right, right. Sorry. I am still half-asleep. What time is it?"

Half-past September.

Kris ran a hand through his thick hair. Nobody any closer for this one?

Betty Burton was handling it.

Yeah, and . . .

He floated to the top of the coast of Galveston. He must have been in the Gulf for almost a week. They packed plastic charges on his inner thighs.

"Okay, don't describe it. I've read enough of being shook out of sleep. Is there a dossier?"

Waiting for you at Hilltop.

I'll be there in six hours.

He cracked the receiver, slammered the safe port, and spun the dial. He shoved the plaque back in place on the wall and stood with his ballfed fist lying against the bronze. First light from a fluorescent, sign burning over one of the little people's drafting tables caught his sensed features. The hard, marbled lines of his face were the work of a Giacomini. The eyes were gun-metal blue and flat, as though unseeing. The family cruel mouth was thinned to an vicious. He drew a deep breath and the muscle-corded body drew up with purpose.

Then, reaching over to his desk, he opened a drawer and hung three times, sharply, on a concealed button set into the underside of a drawer. Down below, in the labyrinth, PoPo would be plunging out of his cocoon, putting on his liaclock and earrings, tapping out the code to fill the great chamber with water.

Peace on Earth. "Kris murmured, staring back for the bedroom and his wet suit.

PoPo was waiting in the grotto, standing on a jet-driven shelf beside the air tanks. Kris nodded to the title one and turned his back. PoPo helped him into his rig, and when Kris had cleared the mouthpiece adjusted the oxygen mixture. "Keckle keckle?" PoPo inquired.

"Sounds like it," Kris replied. He wanted to be on his way.

"Di-dill neat pressure," PoPo said.

"Thanks. I'll need it." He moved quickly to the egress chamber, which had been fiked and armed. He undugged the wheel and swung the port open. A few racks of Arctic water in the basal floor. He turned. Keep the key plant going. And look out this problem on tier 9 with CutLo. I'll be back in time for the holidays."

He put one foot over the sill, then turned and added, "If everything goes okay."

Webber zee-tee. said PoPo.

Yeah, no war says to you, too. He stepped inside the egress chamber, spun the wheel hard to dog it, and signalled through the lucite port. PoPo filled the chamber and Kris blew himself out.

The water was black and sub-zero. The homing light on the sub was his only comfort. He made it to the steel fish quickly, and within minutes was on his way. Once he had passed the cover entrance of the floe, he surfaced, converted to airborne, blew the tanks that grinded the periscopes, and tugged for a takeoff. Aloft, he made range velocity and covered again.

Three hundred miles behind him somewhere below the Arctic Ocean, PoPo was raising CoLo from his cocoon and chafing the hell out of him for putting European threats on all the roller states, thereby making all the American boys useless.

ESP III 103

Hilltop was inside a mountain in Colorado. The peak of the mountain swung open, allowing Kris's VTOL (the sub, in its third conversion) to drop down onto the target pad.

He went quickly to the secret place. The Taskmaster was waiting for him with the dossier. Kris flipped it rapidly despite memory. "S.P.I.D.E.R. again," he said softly. Then, with an exasperated tone, "It means."

Society for
Pollution,
Infection and
Destruction of
Earthmen's
Resources

is that it?" The Taskmaster shook his head. Kris murmured, "Well, what are they up to this time?" I thought we'd put them out of commission after that anthrax business in the Valley of the Winds.

The Taskmaster tilted back in his plastic chair.

The multifaceted eyeball-globes around the room picked up pinpoints of brilliance from the chair and cast them over the walls in a subtle light show. It is as you read there. They've taken over the minds of those eyes. What they intend to do with them as puppets, we have no idea."

Kris scanned the last again. Reagan Johnson Nixon Humphrey Daley Wallace Madden and who's this last one?—Speed Agnew?"

Doesn't matter. We can usually keep them out of trouble, keep them from hurting themselves, but since S.P.I.D.E.R. got into them, they've been running amok."

I've never even heard of most of these. How the hell could you, up there, making toys."

"It's the best cover I've ever had. So don't get cranky, just because you never see a newspaper. Take my word for it: these are the names this season."

Whatever? happened to that what's-his-name "Billie?"

Didn't pair out.

S.P.I.D.E.R. Kris said again. Does it stand for

Special
Pollution
Injury on
Destruction
Everybody's
Race

? The Taskmaster shook his head again, a bit wearily.

Kris rose and shook the Taskmaster's hand from the dossier. I suggest the best end for starting is with this Daley, a Chicago."

The Taskmaster nodded approval. That's what COBOL'd said, too. You'd better stop down and see the Agnew before you leave. He's hatched-up a few new surprises for you.

"Will I be working that dumb old suit again?"

As a space, probably. It's a little early for the red suit.

What time is it?"

Half-past September.

ESP IV 103

When Kris emerged from the dropshaft, Miss Seven-Seventeen's eyes grew round. He came toward her with the gray convulsed smile that set him so far apart from the rest of the agents. (Most of them were little more than pudgy file clerks when had she ever gotten the idea that espionage was a time of well-bated to Adonises? Surely from the endless stream of bad spy novels that had glutted the newsmen, what a shock when she had discovered that pinching the argumentative nerve to cause excruciating pain, or overpowering an enemy by cupping both hands and slapping both of his ears simultaneously were tactics as easily employed by men who assembled suits, as by beaklike costumed winners. Tactics equally as effective when struck by goblets of mud as by Robin slanders.) But Kris.

He came up to her desk and stared down silently until she dropped her eyes. Then, "Hello, Chan."

She could not look at him. It was too painful. The Bahamas. That night the gibbous moon hanging above them like an all-watching eye as the night winds played a wild accompaniment counterpoint to their intestine passion, the lunar surf breaking around them on the silver sands. The

good-bye. The waiting. The report from upstairs that he had been lost in Tibet. She could handle none of it now with him standing there, a thick white scar across his forehead, now hidden by his shirt, but known to her nonetheless, a scar made by Tatler Krashev's snare. She knew every inch of his flesh, and she could not answer. "Well, answer, stupid!" he said.

He seemed to understand. "Kris is here, sir. The red light flashed on her head, and without looking up she said, 'The Assassin will see you.'"

He strode past her, seemingly intent on walking into the stone wall. At the last possible instant it slid back smoothly and he disappeared into the Assassin's workshop. The wall slid back and Sever-Severians suddenly realized he had been lying, guilty that her incoherent noise had drawn blood from her lips.

The Assassin was a thickset, bluff man given to rascals and pipes. His pockets were made specially for him on Savile Row, with many pockets, to hold the safes of gaudy and pipe sets he can afford to carry.

Kris, good to see you. He took the agent's hand and pumped it effusively. "Maman Maria, wad!"

No, as a matter of fact it's one of those miracle fibers. Kris replied, turning smoothly to show the center vent, depressed waist, Education-style patch pocket jacket. "Something my man in Hong Kong whipped up. Like a

Elgant, the Assassin said. "But we aren't here to discuss each other's sartorial elegance are we?

They had a small mutual laugh at that. Divided evenly, it took less than ten seconds. Step over here, the Assassin said, moving toward a wall rack where several gadgets were displayed on pegboards. I think you'll find these most interesting.

I thought I wasn't supposed to see the red suit this time, Kris said lightly. The red suit was hung neatly on a teakwood rail near the wall. The Assassin turned and gave him a surprised look.

Oh? Who told you that? Kris touched the suit, frowning at it absently. The Taskmaster. The Assassin's mouth drew down in a frown. He pulled a pipe from a jacket pocket and thrust it between his lips. It was a Sauter Pantall with an apple bowl shape, seriously in need of a carbon-oxide scrubbing.

Well, let us just say the Taskmaster occasionally fails to follow his own laws of communication. He was obviously distressed, but Kris was in no mood to become embroiled in interoffice politics.

Show me what you've got.

The Assassin pulled a small penlight-shaped gadget off one of the pegboards. There was a clip on its upper end for attaching to a short pocket.

Proud of this one. I call it my identity light, shake. He lit the pipe with a Comsol burner lighter, sucking up the flame till it was blue, just right for soldering.

Kris took the penlight-shaped gadget and turned it over and over. "Neat. Very compact.

The Assassin looked like a man who had just bought a new car about to ask a neighbor to guess how much he had paid for it. Ask me what it does.

What does it do? "Spreads darkness for a radius of two miles. Can't

No, really I mean it. Just turn the clip to the right, see, no, don't do it now for Christ's sake! You'll blot out all of Hilltop—where you got in a spot, and you need an escape. Just twist that clip and flicker you've got all the cover you need for an escape." The Assassin blew a dense cloud of pipe smoke. It was Murray's Erasmus Michon, very aromatic.

Kris kept looking at the man. "What's new with

that?"

The Assassin pointed with the stem of the pipe. It was a museum. "Well, you've got the good stuff, the rockets, the jet-pack, the anagles, the snare and the blade, the throwing knives, the high-pressure hose, the best-spikes, the 30 caliber machine gun, the acid, the flamethrower, the stomach roll inflator into a raft, the flamethrower, the panic explosives, the red rubber snare grenade, the holy lotus, the boomstick, the bolo, the bow, the machine, the dagger, the belt buckle time bomb, the lockpick equipment, the scuba gear, the camera and Xerox attachment in the bag, the steel plates with the extensible hooks, the gas mask, the poison gas, the short repellent, the Sierro stove, the survival ration, and the microfilm library of one hundred great books."

Kris fingered the tag again. "Heavy."

But in addition, the Assassin said happily, this time we've really extended ourselves down here in Assassin—

You're doing a helluva job.

Thanks sincerely Kris.

No, I mean really.

Yes, well, in addition this time the suit has been fully accessorized and when you depress that third button on the jacket the entire suit becomes inflatable, airborne, and ready for level-five flight."

Kris pulled a soot face. "If I ever fall over I'll be like a turtle on its back."

The Assassin gave Kris a job of consuetudine on the left bicep. "You're a great kiddie, Kris." He pointed to the boots. "Goggles. Keep you level at all times. You can't fall over."

I'm a great kiddie. What else have you got for me?

The Assassin stepped to the pegboard and pulled off an automatic pistol. Try this.

He depressed a button on the control console and the east wall of the Assassin's workshop, revealing a firing range behind it. Silhouette targets were lined up at the far end of the range.

What happened to my Wembley?" Kris asked.

"Too bulky. Too unsuitable. Latest thing is holding a Laxler-Krupp laser explosive. Some-thing."

Kris turned, showing his thinnest side to the state silhouettes. He extended and retracted his right arm, tracing it with left hand around right wrist, and squeezed the trigger. A beam of light and a brilliant hiss erupted from the muzzle of the weapons. At the same instant, down the tunnel, all ten of the silhouettes vanished in a burst of blinding light. Shrapnel and bits of stone wall ricocheted back and forth in the tunnel. The sound of their destruction was deafening.

Jesus God in Heaven. Kris murmured, turning back to the Assassin, who was only now removing the glare-blind goggles. "Why didn't you warn me about this stupid thing. I can't see one of those have to be semiprecious circumstances, something like this thing would be fine to level Gibraltar but it's ridiculous for hand-to-hand combat. There, take it."

He thrust the weapon at the Assassin.

Ignore it, my Wembley, you boomer."

"Take it. It's there on the wall, you short sighted slave of the Establishment."

Kris grabbed the automatic and the deadly night shade. "Send the suit case of my contact in Montgomery, Alabama," he said, hurrying toward the door.

Maybe I will and maybe I won't, you moron. Kris stopped and turned. Listen, man, listen. I can't stand here and argue with you about freepower. I've got to save the world."

Ministrance. Last time, brother.

Credibly, brother! And I hate your damned blue-shirt, that's what. I hate the stupid loud thing.

He marched the wall, which slid back, and dashed

through. Just before it closed completely, the Assassin threw down his pipe, snatched it with his foot and screamed. "And I hate that baggy jacket of yours!"

Ep V 53

Chicago, from the Street Drive, looked like an immense burning garbage dump. They were rising again on the South Side. And from the direction of Evanston and Skokie could be seen twin spiraling smokes of thick, black smoke. A Evanston the DAR was looking and burning, in Skokie the DAR had joined with the women of the WCTU from Evanston, and the office of a paperback pornographer were being razed. The city was going mad.

Kris drove the rental package Maerz, into Ohio Street, turned right onto the underground ramp of the motel and let the attendant take it. Carrying only his attaché case, he made for the first exit leading up to the first floor of the motel. Once inside the stairwell, however, he turned to the blank wall, used his sonic signalizer and the wall pivoted open. He hurried inside, closed the wall, and threw the attaché case onto the double bed. The WAITING light was glowing on the closed curtain television. He flicked the set on, stood in front of the camera, and was pleased to see that his Chicago contact, Freya, was wearing her hair long again.

Hello, Ten-Nineties, he said.

Hello, Kris. Welcome to the Windy City.

You've got big troubles.

How soon do you want to start? I've got Daley

preoccupied.

How soon can I get to him?

Tonight.

Soon enough. What are you doing at the moment?

Not much.

Where are you?

Down the hall.

I come to meet

in the afternoon."

A heavily robed in a healthy body.

See you in ten minutes.

Wear the discipline.

Ep VI 54

Dressed entirely in black, the Wembley is an upstart down breakaway rig, its best just protruding from his left armpit. Kris pulled himself across the open space between the electrified fence and the dark, squat powerhouse, his arms and legs crisscross in the traditional infamyman's crouch.

Inside that building, Daley had been preoccupied by Ten-Nineties' trucking equipment. He had been there for almost two days, even through the rain.

Kris had asked Freya what he was up to, then in the powerhouse. She had not known. The entire building was damped, susceptible to any amount she had employed. That was S.P.I.D.E.R. but not, whatever it was—that had to be for dual certain. For a man in his position to be cloaked away like that, while his city went up in flames—that had to be for dual certain.

Kris reached the base of the powerhouse. He slid along its face till he could see the blacked-out window of the eleven floor. They were nearly a foot over his head. No purchase for climbing. He had to put a smooch-grate. He drew three deep breaths, broke the Wembley out of its pocket and pulled the tape around round the butt. It came loose, and he taped the weapon onto his hand. There those more deep breaths. Digging hard he dashed away from the building, thirty feet into the open, landed at breath again, spun and dashed back for the powerhouse. Almost at the base of the building

films and cooler clients. acting on a speech S P I D E R He took the remaining seven in video.

REAGAN CAMARILLO, CALIFORNIA

Having closed down the state mental institutions on the unsatisfactory theory that nobody was really in need of psychiatric attention ("It's all in their heads") Reagan had said in a \$300-a-plate American Legion dinner only six months earlier. Kris found him in the men's toilet on the first floor of the abandoned Camarillo state facility, combing his pompadour.

Reagan spun around, seeing Kris's reflection in the mirror and screamed for help from one of his zombie assistants. A man in green, who was cloistered in a pay toilet (Inmates had been paid a monthly dole in Regulation Golden State Scrip, converted from monies sent to them by married children who didn't want their broken-down parents' relatives around, so scrip could be used to work the pay solers Reagan had always believed in a pay-as-you-go system of state government.)

Kris hit the booth with a suture sack that shattered the door just as the man in green was emerging, the side of his shoe collapsing the man's spine. Then the agent backed himself on Reagan, in an attempt to capture him, subdue him, and somehow keep the S P I D E R symbiote within Reagan's head from self-destructing. But the devilishly handsome Reagan abruptly pulled away and as Kris watched, horrified, he began in shimmer and change shape.

In moments it was no Reagan standing before Kris, but a seven-headed Hydra, breathing from seven mouths (a fire, b) ammonia clouds, c) dust, d) broken glass, e) chlorine gas, f) mustard gas, g) a combination of halitosis and rock music.

Three of the heads (c, e, and f) lunged forward on their serpentine necks, and Kris flattened against the toilet wall. His hand darted into his jacket and came out with a ball-point pen. He shook it twice, anticlockwise and the pen converted into a two-handed sword. Wielding the carrier safely Kris lay about him with vigor and in a few minutes the seven heads had been severed.

Kris aimed true for the heart of the beast, and ran it through. The great body thumped over on its side, and lay still. It shimmered and changed back into Reagan. Then the black thing scampered out of his ear, erupted, and smeared the floor tiles with snot.

Later Reagan combed his hair and applied punk-makeup to the glare spots on his nose and cheekbones, and moaned pitifully about the really funny things he had done under the stupefying and incredibly evil direction of S P I D E R. He swore he didn't know what the letters of the organization's name stood for. Kris was depressed.

Reagan then showed him around the Camarillo plant, explaining that his part of the right-point plan was to use the great machines on the second and third floors to spread sanity through the atmosphere. They broke up the machines with some difficulty, much of the equipment was very hard plastic.

Reagan assured Kris he would work with Hilltop to cover the demand of the second phase of the eight-point plan, and that from this day forward (he raised a hand in the Boy Scout salute) he would be as good as good, could be: he would bring about much needed property use reform, he would stop analyzing the incidents at UCLA, he would subscribe to the LA Free Press, the Answer, the East Valley Observer, the Berkeley Back Horndog, Open City, and all the other underground newspapers so he could find out what was really happening, and within the week he would initiate daily classes in folk dancing, soul music and peaceful conglom for members of the various police departments within the state.

He was smiling like a man who had regained that innocence of childhood or nature that he had none here lost.

JOHNSON JOHNSON CITY, TEXAS

Kris found him eating mashed potatoes with his hands, sitting apart from the rest of the crowd. He looked like hell. He looked weary. There was half an eaten cow on a spit, hanging lazily over chaotic embers. Kris settled down beside him and passed the time of day. He thought Kris was with the party. He belched. Then Kris snapped a finger against his right temple, and dragged his subconscious form into the woods.

When Johnson came around, he knew it was all over. The S P I D E R symbiote actually erupted, smeared on the dead leaves—it was now the middle of October—and Johnson said he had to hurry off to stop the war. Kris didn't know which war he was referring to, but it sounded like a fine idea.

Tell me, said Kris calmly, does S P I D E R mean

Secret
Prayers
Involved in
Demolishing
Everything
Right-minded

or is it something even more obscure?

Johnson spread his hands. He didn't know. Johnson told him his part of the right-point plan was something war. And butchering babies. But now that was all over. He would recall the troops. He would let all the dissenters out of prison. He would resort for peace. He would send grain to needy nations. He would take election issues. Kris shrugged and moved on.

HUMPHREY & NIXON WASHINGTON, D C

It was a week after the election. One of them was president. It didn't matter. The other one was shilling for the opposition, and between them they'd divided the country down the middle. Nixon was trying to get a good slave, and Humphrey was trying to learn to wear contact lenses that would make his eyes look bigger.

You know, Dick, the trouble is, basically I get funny little eyes. Like a bird, y'know?

Nixon turned from the mirror on the office wall and said, "You should complain. I've got five a clock shadow and it's only three-thirty. Hey, who's that?"

Humphrey turned in the easy chair and saw Kris. "Goodbye, S P I D E R," Kris said, and fired sleep darts at each of them.

Before the darts could hit the black things scattered, erupted, and smeared "Darn!" Kris stood and left the office without waiting for Nixon and Humphrey to regain consciousness. It would be a week or two before that happened in any case. The Assassin wasn't yet on target when it came to gauging how long people stayed under with these darts. Kris left because he knew their parts of the eight-point plan were to confuse issues, to sow confusion and dissonance in the atmosphere. Johnson had told him that much. Now they would become sweet fellas, and the president would play like he had a watchbird watching him, saying so-so.

Christmas was fast a-corning. Kris was homesick.

S P I D E R

S P I D E R tried to kill Kris in Memphis, Detroit, Cleveland, Great Falls, and Los Angeles. They resisted.

MADDOX ATLANTA, GEORGIA

It was too ugly to describe. It was the only S P I D E R given that Kris had to kill. With a taste gold as handle, a souvenir of Maddox's famous remembrance. Kris destroyed the rigger-tasting machine. Maddox's part in the eight-point plan, and he fired chickens all the way to Montgomery, Alabama.

WALLACE MONTGOMERY ALABAMA

The red-robed Santa Claus nudged across the open square in front of the Montgomery state building, changing his little brass bell. The Santa Claus was far jolly bearded, and possibly the deadliest man in the world.

Kris looked around him as he plowed through the ankle-deep snow. The state buildings were clustered around the perimeter of the circular square, and he had a terrible prickling feeling up and down his spine. It might have been the cumbersome jacket with all its equipment, so confining it made him sweat even in the midst of December 24th cold and whiteness. His boots were soaking wet from the snow. His pace measured, so he climbed the State House steps, watching.

Everything was closed down for the holidays. All Alabama state facilities. Yet there was movement inside the city. But museum shoppers hurrying to fulfill their quotas as happy consumers, children scurrying here and there, seeming to be going somewhere, but probably just carousing. (Kris always smiled when he saw the kids, they were only the only hope they had to be protected, not cut off from reality, but simply protected, and the increasing cynicism in the young had begun to disturb him, yet it seemed so though the young activists were fighting against everything S P I D E R stood for, unconsciously, but doing a far better job than their elders.)

A man hurrying past, down the steps, bounded to the curb in a heavy topcoat, glanced sidewise, squinting and ignored the outnumbered donation cup the Santa Claus preferred. Kris continued on up.

The tracking devices made the far-astarred but he wore nose bleeds, and the range finding trackers were phasing together as Kris neared Wallace. It was going to be a problem getting into the building, the then, if it weren't for problems, making it necessary to carry such a surplus of equipment in the red suit. Santa Claus would be a thin, swift figure. "No ho ho ho," Kris murmured, expelling puffs of frosty air.

As he reached the first landing of the State House, Kris began the implementation of his plan to gain access. Fingertipping the salt controls in the palm of his right mitten, he directed the high-pressure hoses toward a barred window on the left wing of the State House. Once they had locked in directionally Kris cranked the tubes in and acid and napalm, depressed the firing studs, and watched as the hoses sprayed the window with acid, dissolving bars and glass alike. Then the napalm erupted from the hoses in a burning spray, arcing over the snow and striking the gaping hole in the face of the State House. In moments the front of the State House was burning.

Kris hit the jet-pack and went straight up. When he was hovering at two hundred feet, he cut in the rockets and zoomed over the State House. The rockets died and Kris settled slowly, then cut out the jet-pack. He was on the roof, unseen. The fire would keep their attention. At this stage in the eradication of the right-point plan they would be expecting him, but they wouldn't know it would be so formidable an assault force.

The gaugers were giving a hot reading from the

North Wing of the State House. Mic seven-lugue boots allowed him to leap over the stone railings, and he pushed plastic chairs along the edges of the roof, dumping them with propulsion spray as the force of their blast would be directed downward. Then he set the timer and leaped back to the section of roof where his trackers gave him the strongest Wallace reading. Extending the bolts in his suit, he cut a circular patch in the roof, then burned it out with acid. It hung in its place. Suddenly, the plastic chairs went off on the roof of the South Wing, and under cover of the smoke, he struck. He used the best angles to kick in the circular patch he cut in the roof. The ceramic opening had cut through the roofing material; now he used the flamethrower to burn through the several layers of gulf and plaster and bracing. All that stood between him and entrance was the plaster of the ceiling. He withdrew a grenade from the lower portion of the capacities suit, pulled the pin, released the handle, and dropped it into the hole. There was a sharp, short explosion, and when the plaster dust cleared, he was free to leap down inside the Alabama State House.

Kris jumped, seeing the burst of light bounce. He jumped into a readily waiting group of government zombies. "He's in!" Kris cheered again, jumping up with the machine guns. Bodies spun and flipped and careened off the walls, and seconds later the explosion against the steel roof began to be seen through the windows.

There had been only one door in the room. Kris now had to force his way in. He pushed off the red rubber mats and leaped it. The door exploded outward in a cascading shower of splintered wood peckery. He plunged through the smoke and still flying wreckage. He had barely started to follow the pungent agency of his trackers. Wallace was moving. Trying to get away? Maybe.

Hausing out the hole left, he dashed forward again. Green-suited zombies came at him from a cross corridor, and he backed his way through them without pause. A door spanned off the wall beside him and he half-turned, letting a throwing knife drop into his hand from its tilted shaft. The marksmen was half-in, half-out of a doorway down the corridor. Kris let the knife slide down his palm, caught it by the tip, and in one quicksilver move moved overhauled it. The knife just scored the edge of the doorjamb and buried itself in the zombie's throat. He disappeared inside the room.

The trackers were now indicating a blank wall at the end of a cul-de-sac. Kris came on it a full-on hit, his body armor locked for ramming. He hit the wall and went right through. Behind the blank face of the cul-de-sac was a more stairway leading down into the darkness. Zombies lurked on those stairs. But 30 cm of steel was good enough for them; Kris slid down the stairs, firing ahead of him. The zombies pushed away and fell into darkness.

At the bottom he found the underground river, and saw the triangular black blades of shark dorsal fins. Soil muzzering him to be. Kris dove headfirst into the abyssal blackness. The water closed over him, and nothing more could be seen, save the flurrying of sharks.

Less than an hour later, the entire Alabama State House and much of the public square went straight up in a brilliant explosion of such force that windows were knocked out in that back house of jet darkness in Berlin.

Ed's XIV 63

She was lightly scraping her long pointed fingertips down his naked back. He was prone on his bed, occasionally reaching to the nightstand for a pull on the whiskey and water. The vivid scars that cut pulsed on his back seemed to stretch far. She was far full lips, and her naked, large nipples began heaved in the doorway, his body

"He fought in the end. And the son-of-a-bitch was the only one of the eight who really liked that black thing in his head. Really positively evil. Worst of the bunch: no wonder S.P.I.D.E.R. picked him to run the right-point plan." He buried his face in the pillow as though trying to blot out the memory of what had gone before.

"I wasted those and a half month for you to come back," the blond said, riding her breast. "The least you could do is tell me where you were!"

He turned over and grabbed her. He pulled her down to him and ran his hands over her lush flesh. She wanted to burn with a special heat. Much, much later sometime in mid-January he released her and said: Baby, it's just too goddam ugly to talk about. All I'll say is that if there had been any chance of saving that Wallace number from his own mistakes, I'd have taken it.

He was killed?

When the underground caverns blew. South half the state of Alabama. Finney thing was. It took mostly Caucasian holdings. All the phones not still standing. The new governor—Shelby X. Tanner—had declared the entire state a disaster area, and he got the Black Cross organized to come in and help as the poor white folks who would refuse it by the explosion. That blasted Wallace even have had the entire state wired.

Sounds dreadful.

Dreadful? You know what that fish had at his part of the right-point plan?

The fish looked at him wide-eyed.

I'd tell you. It was his job—through the use of tremendously sophisticated equipment—to harness the thought processes of the young, in age then. To set their concepts into concrete. When we expanded all that devil's machinery suddenly everyone started thinking freely, digging each other, hating to one another and realizing that the world was in a very state, and that what they'd been sure of, a moment later might just possibly be in question. He was really turning the young into old. And it was causing aging.

You mean we don't age naturally?

Well, no. It was S.P.I.D.E.R. that was making us get older and older and fall apart. Now we'll all stay the way we are. Reach an age physically of about thirty-six or so—in and then count us out for another two or three hundred years. And, oh yeah, no cancer.

That too?

Kris nodded.

The blond lay on her back and Kris traced a pattern on her stomach with his large scarred hands. Just one thing—the blond said.

Yeah, what's that?

What was S.P.I.D.E.R.'s right-point plan all about? I mean, aside from the individual elements of making everyone hate everyone else, what were they trying for?

Kris shrugged. "That, and what the name S.P.I.D.E.R. means, we may never know. How their organization has been broken up. Shame would've liked to know."

And now you know, a voice suddenly said, inside Kris's head. The blond rose up off the bed and withdrew a deadly trigger pistol from beneath the pillow. Our agents are everywhere, she said, telepathically.

You? Kris exclaimed.

Since the moment you returned, after Christmas. While you were recuperating from your wounds lying there unconscious, I slipped up—having fooled you from Alabama—that's why you never found evidence that Wallace's symbiote had self-destructed. I slipped in and created this poor back. What needs you think you had broken at, feel? We are everywhere. We came to this planet stay years ago—check your history, you'll find the exact date. We are here, and here we stay. For the present to wage a terrorist war, but soon—to take over the world for ourselves. The right-point plan was our main ambition at date.

And you're...? Kris asked. Please answer, please, please. confusion, confusion, substance, among... among... among... what kind of fish are you?

We are S.P.I.D.E.R. the voice said. While the blond held the needle on him. And once you know what S.P.I.D.E.R. stands for, you will know what our right-point plan was intended to do to you poor, weak Earthmen.

Watch! the voice was urgent. And the S.P.I.D.E.R. symbiote crawled out of her ear and started for Kris's throat. He started instantly, spitting off the bed. The symbiote moved his head by incredible means. Kris let the wall, almost off with a bare foot, and dove back onto the bed, scrambling around the blond, grabbing her head, and snatching the needle of the weapon as the symbiote. It scuttled for cover even as the blond blast roared across the bedrooms. There Kris jumped for the deadly nightshade, on the bedroom inside him, and buried it.

Instantly it of the underground way-making complex was awash in darkness.

He felt the blond join in his group, and he knew that the S.P.I.D.E.R. symbiote had back to in one place of safety inside her. He had no choice but to kill her. But she threw the needle away, and he was locked there in eternal darkness, on the bed holding her body as it struggled in free will, and he was forced by his subliminal to kill her using the one weapon God had given him when he came into the world.

It was a special weapon, and it took almost a week to kill her.

But when it was over and the darkness had cleared, he lay there thinking. Exhausted, two pounds lighter, weak as a kitten, and thinking. Now he knew what S.P.I.D.E.R. meant.

The symbiote was small, black, hairy and scented on many little legs. The right-point plan was intended to make people feel bad. That simple. It was to make them feel simply crummy. And crummy people kill each other. And people who kill each other leave a world smelt enough for S.P.I.D.E.R.

All he had to do was desire the parents.

Ed's XV 63

The time-motion studies came in the next week. They said that the deliveries this past holiday had been the slowest on record. Kris and PoPo shuffled the reports and smiled. Well, it would be better next year. No wonder it was so sloppy this year—how effective was a Santa Claus who was really an impostor? How effective could Santa Claus be when he was PoPo and CoLo, the one standing on the other's shoulders, wearing a red suit those stars too big for them? But with Kris laid up from saving the world, they had had no choice.

There were complaints coming in from all over. Even from K.L.Hop.

PoPo, Kris said, when the phones refused to cease clanging. I'm not taking any calls. They want me; they can reach me at Antilles. I'm going off to sleep for three months. They can reach me in April, approximately.

He started out of the office just as CoLo ran in, a wild expression on his face. "Geebe, gup, Innese, jam-jam," CoLo said. Kris slumped back into his seat.

He dropped his head into his hands. Everything was wrong. Disaster had knocked up Visant. "The shift just won't let you live," Kris murmured, and began crying.

Editor's Note: The entire reader will be quick to notice that Mr. Ellison's story has one small flaw in it: The inaudible eight-point plan usually appears the Republican vice-presidential candidate Mr. Spivey Agnew. Apparently the author forgot him. Apparently the author was not the only one.

The Story of Rowlf

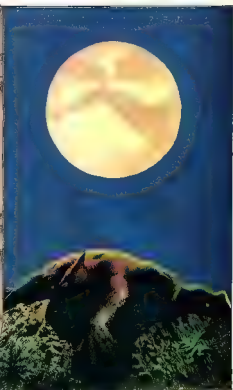
PART 2

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Rowlf collapsed from exhaustion after chasing the kidnapper of his beloved mistress Maryona. He lay unconscious for several hours.

The demon king was many miles ahead then, perhaps defiling Yara at that very moment. The day episode had run until he had dropped. He lay alone in a prime wilderness, unprotected by the people of Caria. A huge sunlit threatening satellite glowed over the scene while a chorus of cockles complained to the inside.

Behind him the castle of Camland had been destroyed, seized by the demonic fantastic weapons. These the horde lingered long enough to root their victims. Unspeakable acts of blood honor were committed upon the dead.



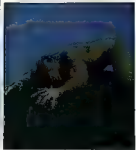
Rowlf was still in the air, his head near the ground, when he fell.



Slowly he opened his eyes, and his head throbbed painfully with the surge of magic within the spirit.



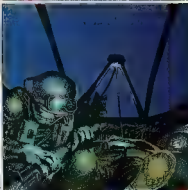
A low, rumbling came to him, felt rather than heard, through the ground.



...a few minutes
it appeared from
... ..

Rowl could see that
they were the dead &
very ...

and that they would
pile near him



Rowl studies the driver and the
vehicle's operator ... he has a plan

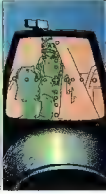
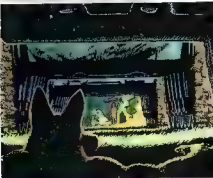


There is a big mud volcano here. It is a big volcano.

As the Jensen pistol started into a nose formation, the nose once again restarted the video at Row 1.

After growling with low speed, he began in charge of the dog's owners.

The mechanics covered their seats as the rest of the police were.



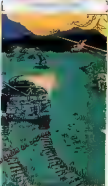
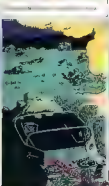
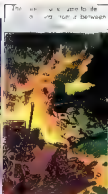
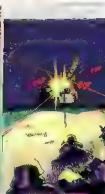
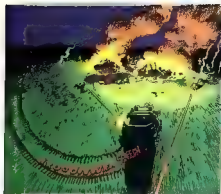


Rowl tried, missed the guard, but
 managing to hit a vital part of the
 machine.



The startled dog jumped into
 the driver's seat and switched
 the power on.





He's no rapide. He's no saloon.

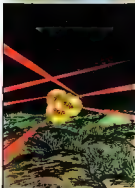


IREGU LINI
IRU!

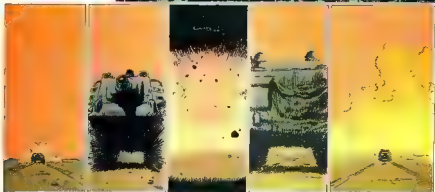
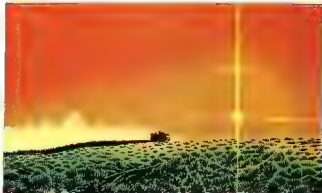
Mortu! Manqu!

1 Hym
Ep Y p

Tie! Pafu! Pafu!



After a while the sky became lighter. The rays of dawn found a lone tank rumbling, rattling and squeaking toward its base. Its tired passenger quivered and bounced at the mercy of the heaving vehicle. The mission had become more difficult than expected—the troops deserved a rest. It would be evening before the tank reached the base's outer guard post. Nothing to do all day but wobble and jiggle in time with the tracks' rumble.



You've got to admit, jumbling a ferret-sized car into hard work, even if you do have modern electronic weapons. Then when you stop for a night's rest, some malfunction stirs up so much trouble that

you don't get a wink of sleep. Before you know it, you're back in a tank, racing across country at top speed. It's enough to change your mind about re-entailing.



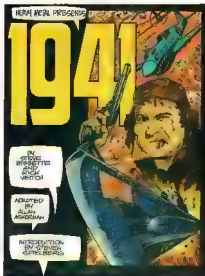
To Be continued

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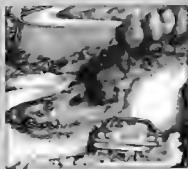
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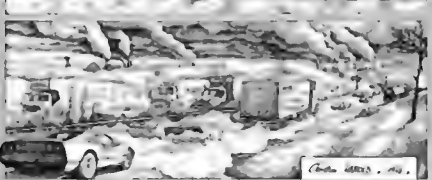
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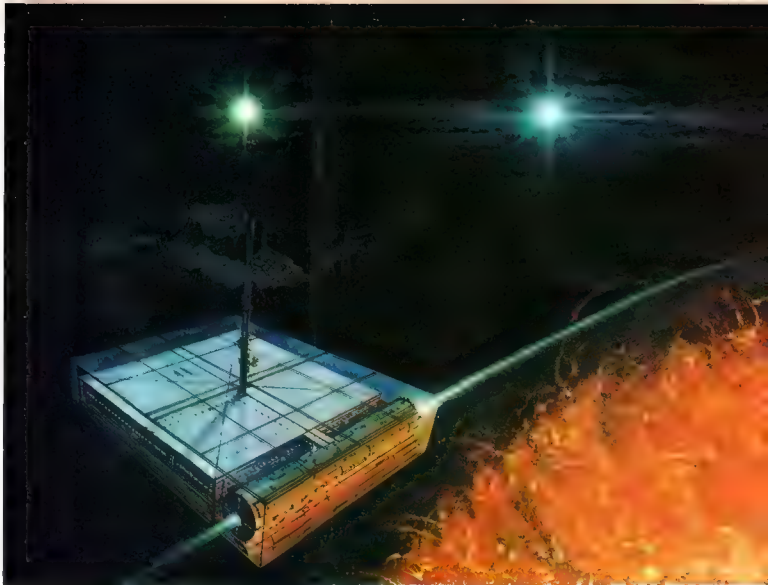
to help
understand
the world
around us
and to help
us to live
better
together

[illegible]

The Geographic is printed in one hundred languages. Among them, two are nonhuman: Nöron and Tsutane. Rarely, seen by humans, the two languages are similar, except that their characters are linear code. The article reads down from left to right while the text reads across from the right.

It reads: Fed Lab Zees Or Tivauri. The word Tivauri is a word of Federation symbols; the article describes the work of Grav-lab's visit to a triple star in the Nöron group to test the Master of Gravity. The word Zees is the subject of keen interest to the Nörons; who developed the concept concurrently with humans. The theory describes matter as nothing and space as something. It is a theory of the universe, the theory of the adverse while agreeing with the psi-holosophical concept of matter being an idea, like a bubble, floating in a substance. The article describes the displacement of that substance which pushes atoms together. That two civilizations developed the concept at the same time makes this article a landmark in Geographic history.

Karl B. Kofoed





The speedway between bliss and paranoia
is a constant necessity to ride over the slippery wire.
Falling away from the wire.



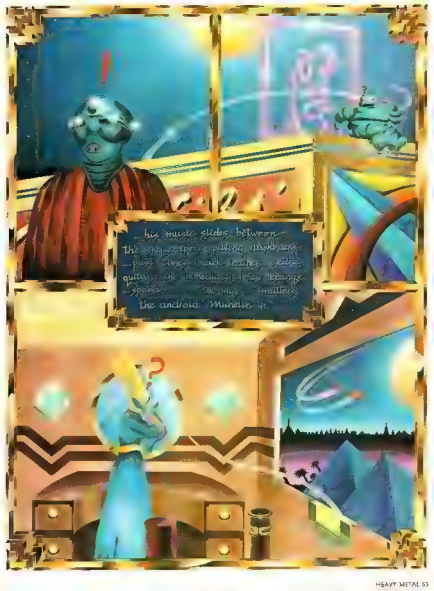
...Down below...
...For a look...
...the atomic
...lighthouse...
...the last
...train... the
...warrior...
...some...
...???



It's Zorino...
...the crazy
...elder from
...54th Street...
...a...
...playing his
...sax...
...magic...
...
...halfmoon...



Winters



...his music glides between
the skyscrapers spitting flambeaus
...past times, black leather, leather
quitar, the loneliness of her teenage
...spend ... Oh my ... matters
the android Michelin Jr.



...everything is now so different...
...the new is the circus... when
Savage... "Duke... danger... "brandy... it's"
...a robot opens your door... "unholy"
...aerobics in your drink... "direct" hot
...music... mental sex... "abandon" poetry

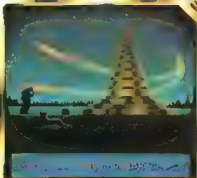
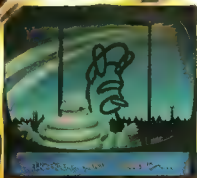
Gill



The most important thing is to be able to
use the information you have to
solve the problem. That's the
key to the solution, and it's the
key to the solution.

Great as I am, I am not perfect. Still, in my laboratory,
I have been working on a Planetary Air Purification
System. It will be the first of its kind. It will clean up
the air in the city and make it safe for everyone to breathe.





However, how do you know that the excellent "Stingee" (July 1979) is a revised, updated version of "Black Hood," now appearing in *Archer's Super Hero Comics Digest* magazine? Archie Comics was going to issue a magazine called *The Black Hood*, which was never published. All the stuff meant for *Black Hood* #1 (and some stories meant for *Tales of Sorcery*) ended up in the aforementioned magazine. Morrow's story is first, then there is good stuff by Adams, Kirby, DeFalco, McWilliams, etc. It's Morrow's creation, of course, but does he know what Archie Comics is doing, and is he getting paid for it? Please pass this on to him if you can.

G. G. Sellman

Yup, Gray knows all about it—he found out about it the same time we did, when both versions turned up on the stands together. "ugh" HM

Dear Heavy Metal,

For a long time now I thought that *Heavy Metal* was a great magazine and your September issue was one of the best yet! But come on! Your article "Thirty was just plain dumb! Whoever gave you the idea that Rock is dead must be living in a whole other world altogether (which might not be so bad). Rock is the greatest! That's my opinion, and also, in my opinion. *Damn sucky!!!*" Some people like it, and that's all right because that's their opinion, but *Rock is not dead* and you can bet your Crayola crayons on it!

Cliff Merle
Clearwater, Fla.

Dear HM

In the September issue of *HM*, the poem, "Thirty" states
"Buehgel pedestrians block up
the streets."

Let's give credit where credit is due. The pedestrian represented in Paul Kitchner's strip "The Bus" are not the creations of Buehgel (Eider or Younger). No, indeed these gruesome crosswalkers are products of the ingenious and enigmatic imagination of Hieronymus Bosch (whose actual name was Jeroen van Aken). Specifically these characters were originally portrayed in three of Bosch's paintings: *The Temptations of St. Anthony*, *The Last Judgement*, and *The Garden of Delights*.

I believe an apology is in order, not only to Mr. Bosch, but to his many (?) admirers. Perhaps you should reprint some of his art in a future issue, for the further enlightenment and entertainment of your readers.

R. Thompson
Orlando, Fla.

It's nice to know we have such well-informed and sharp-eyed readers out there. *Bill Stone of Baltimore* also wrote in—with the more customary spelling of Hieronymus Bosch's name—to point out our error. No

apologies, though. Bosch doesn't care, and your vigilance is surely its own reward.—HM

Dear Metal

Anyone who has grown up with H.P.L. as I have, can tell you that it's not the overblown style, the fainting protagonists, the dark places, or the interference of wilder mortals in the business of the Old Ones that makes Howard Lovecraft so dear, weird, and desirable to us all—it's the horror. The pure head-twisting completeness of Lovecraftian suspension of disbelief. It's not something one can put a finger on and say "This makes it." It's a mood, an atmosphere, an aura of terror that seeps out from between the lines. It's also a believability: once you've suspended the irrationality of it all in nightmares, the nightmares of a cloistered, Aunt-ridden recluse who, like so many fans of fantasy and horror and comics, continually refused to grow up. It's the thing that goes bump in the night, the thing under the bed waiting to grab your ankle the minute you put that foot outside the covers. It's the beast in the closet.

I am, of course, referring to the HPL special issue—the first I've bought in a while—and the first that's made me write an LCC since I stopped treating cold paper four-colors about war sergeants and paranoias as if they were worthy of right college credits. I paneled it I picked up *Metal* #31 for two reasons. One: The cover. Probably the best since #2. Moebius's howler. Reason two: Lovecraft himself. The man was stranger than his stories, and L. Sprague de Camp's biography attests to that. There's a third reason, too, and that's worth its own paragraph.

Stephen R. Bissette. Of everything in the October *Metal*, only the contents page frightened me (The back cover ran a close second.) I mean, really scared the pee from its correct opening. This combination of collage and brush-struck between the lines embodied the feeling of a nightmare, the spirit of what makes HPL an undying name. I was interested in the cover, in the subject matter of the issue, but when I opened to the contents page it was that illustration that made me pick down my twelve bits.

I do have gripes with the issue on a whole though. First: Not enough American stuff. Quite frankly the Europeans were good at first, but the current stuff has become a blight of sameness. Not even that well-done anymore. I would much rather see the likes of Potter, George Smith, Bissette, Vanech, Toebebe, and Simonson than the sick faze style of underground obscenity that's called Clenc, Comillon, and Margerin. So, to Ted White, the new editor, here's one fan casting a vote: Go more American.

There are, of course, certain of the Europeans that should stay—they are good enough to be self-explanatory and introducing Moebius, Deullier, and Brezecz. A host of others, too. You know them.

Stephen Perry

CHAIN MAIL

Dear Editors:

Boy, I read a lot of comics and SF stuff but that story "Freeways" in your August 1979 issue was just plain great! The artwork and color, and using a little black kid to counterpoint the message was fantastic! I want to know more about stories in the future. Do you have any more stories coming our like this?

I also liked "New Ark City." It's nice to see things that are not mostly tits and ass, which for women's lifetime, since we have our own to look at any time.

Joyce Farmer
Laguna Beach, Calif.

Dear HM

In the first place, I wish to felicitate you on your magazine. I have read it since two years ago, and I think it has very fine quality.

I have found only one defect: the total absence of the Spanish artists (J. Ortiz, E. Masoto, Pepe Gonzalez, L. Garcia, Ernie Sio, C. Gimenez, Ops, E. Horelano, etc.), whom I consider some of the best artists in the comic world.

For that reason, I should like to contact the readers of *Heavy Metal* for the purpose of exchanging magazines and publications—to make known to them the work of those artists, and to receive American publications.

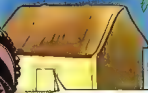
Santiago Juan Navarro
C/ Finestral 33, 1Ba
Valencia-6, Spain

Dear Editors

When I first saw your magazine (first issue) on the newsstands, I didn't like the look of it. Later I found that I had missed an entire treasure trove of great comics literature. So now I buy it on a regular basis, especially for Gray Morrow's good stuff.

PAU PELE PAU MANO

hawaii 1821



"YOUR MAJESTY, MY CHURCHES
REMAIN EMPTY! YOUR PEOPLE
CONTINUE TO DANCE THEIR HEATHEN
HULAS TO THIS VOLCANO PERSON
THEY CALL PELE. IT IS WRONG, THERE
IS BUT ONE TRUE GOD - JEHOVAH!"

LETTERING ONE

© TRINA '79

"IT IS HERE IN THE PUNA AND KAU DISTRICTS, CLOSEST TO KILAUEA CRATER, THAT THE PEOPLE, MORE THAN ANYWHERE
ELSE ON THE ISLANDS, WORSHIP THIS FIRE GODDESS.
O GREAT CHIEF, THE SPELL OF HEATHENISH IDOLATRY OVER THE PEOPLE MUST BE BROKEN."



"BUT OF COURSE THEY WORSHIP
PELE. IT IS DIFFICULT FOR THEM
TO IGNORE HER WHEN THEY LIVE
AT HER FEET. PELE IS ALL
AROUND US."

"BUT SWEET LE'UANI, MY
HEAVENLY FLOWER, SUCH
A TRIP IS CERTAIN TO
BRING DOWN THE
WRATH OF PELE!"

"BAH! IF I AM DESTROYED,
YOU MAY ALL BELIEVE IN
PELE, BUT IF I AM NOT
DESTROYED ALL MUST TURN
TO THE TRUE CHRISTIAN
GOD."

"OLD FOCK! I WILL
JOURNEY TO KILAUEA CRATER
AND SHOW EVERYONE THAT
PELE DOES NOT EXIST!"



HAIL TO THE GREAT CHIEFESS KAPAU'OLANI!

CHIEFESS KAPAU'OLANI DEPARTED KONA FOR KILAUEA, ACCOMPANIED BY A NERVOUS RETINUE

OUT OF OUR WAY, CHILD. WE TRAVEL ON IMPORTANT MATTERS.

AN BUT I BEAR AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE

QUICKLY THEN

"THE WISE TRAVEL UNSEEN, BUT ALL THE WORLD KNOWS A FOOL."

IMPUDENT! GET HER OUT OF MY WAY!

AWAY WARRIOR "WH"?

SHE'S GONE!

RUN OFF!

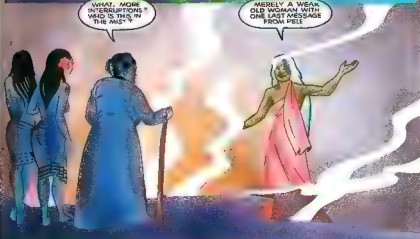
DID YOU SEE HER HAIR?

AYE

CHILD OF A HAOLE SAILOR, I'O WARRANT



CHIEFESS KAPA'U OLANI, ALL 400 POUNDS OF HER, LABORIOUSLY ASCENDS THE VOLCANO



WHAT, MORE INTERRUPTIONS? WHO IS THIS IN THE MIST?

MERELY A WEAK OLD WOMAN WITH ONE LAST MESSAGE FROM PELE



THE PRIESTESS READS FROM HER KAMA

[illegible]

la luahine ma e no o papa enaena pele





IN 1890, MAUNA LOA ERUPTED, AND AN IMMENSE FLOW OF LAVA THREATENED TO ENSLUP THE CITY OF HIL. PRINCESS RUTH KEELIKOLANI JOURNEYED TO THE EDGE OF THE FLOW, WHERE SHE INTONED SACRED CHANTS TO PELE, AND THREW IN GIFTS OF ROAST PORK, RED SCARVES, AND BRANDY. THE LAVA FLOW STOPPED SHORT OF HIL. NOW, THERE WAS A LADY WHO KNEW HOW TO TREAT A GODDESS! (MOST OF THIS IS TRUE.)

"Changed my whole damn life!"

D. Taylor

Boulder, Colorado

You've probably seen a lot of ads lately on doing better with girls. Well, before you decide which book to order, we think you ought to know the following:

HOW TO PICK UP GIRLS is the original, addictive, world-famous book on the subject with over 400,000 copies in print.

HOW TO PICK UP GIRLS is the book that was first featured in the smash hit movie that was seen by over 25 million people on ABC Television.

HOW TO PICK UP GIRLS is the book around which *Men* (in its latest on-line issue) and *Time* (in its new book which *HUSTLER* MAGAZINE later reviewing all the prominent books on the subject) called quite simply **the best**.

Famous author Dan Greenburg had this to say about **HOW TO PICK UP GIRLS**: "**HOW TO PICK UP GIRLS** inspired me, and if you're a man and you read **HOW TO PICK UP GIRLS**, you will probably be able to have dinner with a beautiful lady you just met, even as I do."

Of course, Dan's not the only one who picked up a girl using our techniques. Here are just a few comments from our scores of satisfied customers:

"I tell you, I surprised the rest of myself. By following the guidelines set forth in the book, I was able to pick up a girl. I picked up 2 girls in the same night on my same night. I decided the circumstances were a bit unusual, but I never would have picked up either one of them had I not read your book earlier that day. When I first sent off for the book, though, the price was a little high. But now, I'm sure it would be cheaper at twice the price."

Richard A. San Bernardino, CA 92445

"It works. I wasn't even halfway through it and got a girl. Given my brother-in-law has read out every bit in the world, I said 'Dad, when he sees her, she and I are quite close friends.'"

A.W. Cleveland, MA 01342

Just thought I'd drop you a line to let you know that your book changed my whole damn life. I don't know what kind of accomplishment that is.



How To Pick Up Girls!

since I'm only 18 and highly susceptible to change, but just for the record, you did it. I'm not exactly Joe Hapman yet, but I'll tell you one thing: they're calling me now, & I don't call them.

D. Taylor, Colorado

INTERVIEWS WITH 15 BEAUTIFUL GIRLS

Ever since **HOW TO PICK UP GIRLS** was first published there have been dozens of slick-sounding imitations. One book even goes so far as to promise you girls through hypnosis. What a joke! Science has proven, time and again, you can't get a girl to do anything she doesn't want to do.

How To Make Love To A Single Girl

Here is a book that can turn you into such an exciting lover women will sense your sexual powers the instant you walk into a room. Over 160 luscious photos show you — step by exciting step — exactly how to turn on today's single girls. In these incredibly frank pictures you'll see an expert lover touching, holding, and seducing an unbelievably sexy-looking woman. Each of the more than 60 chapters tells you exactly what arouses a girl. You'll learn — in their own words — a woman's most secret pleasures, the things they love so much from a man they can't resist him. For example, you will discover • the 'magic' place to touch a girl first • How to make a woman "let herself go" • The aphrodisiac touch • The positions girls like best • How to get a girl out of her clothes • What's special about a single girl • How to excite a girl with just words • How to give a woman multiple orgasms • And hundreds of other fantastic techniques, most of them illustrated with incredibly exciting photographs!

Most guys think you have to be good looking or rich to attract lots of women. Not true! In just days **HOW TO MAKE LOVE TO A SINGLE GIRL** will turn you into the kind of lover women just can't wait to go to bed with. **We guarantee it!**



No, the sure way into a girl's heart is through charm and imagination. And that's precisely why **HOW TO PICK UP GIRLS** can be such a help. **HOW TO PICK UP GIRLS** features interviews with twenty-five young, hip, good-looking girls. They tell you in their very own words exactly what makes you tick, then up. For example, you will learn:

- How to make women horny • How to make any man work for you • Why a man doesn't have to be good-looking • How to be a big hit in discos and nightclubs • Girls favorite places for getting picked up • Opening lines that never fail to get them at work • An ingenious, foolproof way to meet women at work, at school, on the street • How to use a smile to make a woman to follow her lips where you want her to go • How to get girls to pick you up • And MUCH MUCH MORE.

GET THE ORIGINAL

You don't want a book that promises you success with girls. You want one that delivers. And you can only get **HOW TO PICK UP GIRLS** has helped more men pick up more girls than any other book in the world! Don't be fooled by second-rate imitations. Get the original. The Classic. The one that's been featured on the Johnny Carson Show and the Dr. Joyce Brothers Show.

Think of it this way: A book doesn't set 400,000 copies by accident. Clearly, it can take you only so far. Add a real world on how to make a man work for you. Add a woman to follow her lips where you want her to go. Add some pretty good things about **HOW TO PICK UP GIRLS**. As the young man said in the letter above, **IT CAN CHANGE YOUR WHOLE DAMN LIFE.**

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SEPARATE VACATIONS — Eric Weber's new novel coming this fall.

A TALE OF CHRISTMAS

PH 400005

SO DO
YOU SEE
THEM?

WEAN
ALWAYS
THE SAME
ALWAYS
HEADING
WEST

THEY'RE
BEAUTIFUL
THOSE
ADULT
MALES!

LET'S CONNECT
THEM TO THE COM-
PUTER'S MEMORY,
OR ELSE WE'LL
LOSE THEM.

VERBAL TRUTH IS
FOR SOME

THE NEW YORK
LIBRARY

I CAN'T GO ON
I'M WASHED OUT AUNT
ING LIPPONS ON FOOT
IS CRAZY TOMORROW
YOU CAN CONTINUE WITHOUT
ME I'LL HAIL A HELICOPTER
BACK TO THE
BASE

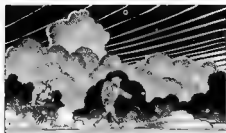
IT'S THE COUNTRY THAT
SOFTENS US, WARMED EAT
YOUR INSIDE MEAT AND GET
SOME SLEEP HUNTING
ALONG AS TO RENEW OUR
CONTACT WITH NATURE
BUT WE MUST GO
THIS LATE

OH, LISTEN TOMORROW IF
YOU START AGAIN I CAN GIVE
SOME HOT STUFF ON YOU!

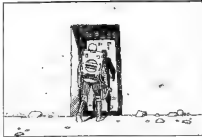
ON SOME
UNDINES.

THAT'S
NOT
DESIDEN
2

AHA! DO
 YOU THINK?
 THERE'S NO HUNT
 WITHOUT A RIFLE.
 NO HUNTER WITHOUT
 YACONINE



UNTIL THE DAY WHEN EVERYTHING CHANGES BECAUSE THINGS CHANGE ON BARASCALPOE AS THEY DO EVERYWHERE ELSE...

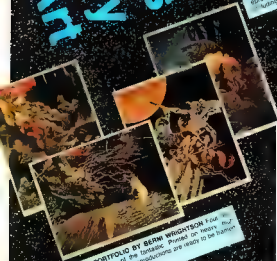


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and
Berni Wrightson

Of Fantasy Giants Art



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All checks must be payable within the continental U.S.
New York State residents, please add 8 percent sales tax.

COLLECTOR'S ITEMS



GNOMES

THE TRUE, INSIDE STORY

For centuries gnomes have maintained an untarnished image among the "bog people." Gnomes have been regarded as crusty but good-hearted—little folk of ageless wisdom, who will stop at nothing to help a baby robin regain its nest, and can often be found mending broken buttercups.

However, gnomes have their less-publicized, darker sides; for not all gnomes have enjoyed living care lives among woodland creatures, caring for the ill, and suchlike. Now, *Heavy Metal* dares to rip aside the cloak of silence that has covered gnomish misdeeds. The skeleton—among other things—is out of the closet at last!



THE HOBO-GNOMES

The advent of modern society displaced many gnomes from their traditional roles and left them foodless and untended for any useful occupation. Living all but unnoticed in the municipal

garbage dumps of many modern cities and towns, these, the dregs of gnomedom, find little indeed to amuse themselves and often live wasted lives deep in the degradation of abject poverty. Outcasts among their own kind, theirs is a bleak existence, little noticed and cared for by even their neighbors, the mis, with whom they compete for their lowly niche.

BY LUCK AND FLAW



THE GNOMO-SEXUALS

Spoken of only in whispers, the gnomosexuals have gained nearly complete control of gnomish arts, maintaining that their lavender sensibilities are best suited to the delicate nuances of clothing design, interior decoration, music, drama, and—yes—the publication of books about gnomes. Here we see Nuts and Pies Gnome, who have gained for themselves an inconspicuous but highly placed position in the publishing industry.



THE CARCI-GNOMES

Hated even by other gnomes, the Carci gnomes are degenerate gnomes whose bodies have been wracked by modern environmental pollutants and whose minds have deteriorated from pain and the consumption of toadstools. Perverse in their pleasures, Carci gnomes enjoy the slow and painful deaths brought about in big people by wasting disease, and can be found celebrating their arcane rites between the nurses' rounds, late at night in hospitals. Because they are shunned by right-thinking gnomes, the Carci gnomes live empty lives, being forced to consume the hallucinogenic toadstools that in turn propel them deeper into their degeneracy.

THE KU KLUX GNOMES

Enbittered, some gnomes living in the American South have changed the spelling of the word *gnome* to *knome*—which, not unsurprisingly, they still pronounce in the same way. Because they found themselves underfoot among the big people, they took to increasing their stature to near-human height by the simple expedient of standing upon each other's shoulders and draping a sheet over themselves in order to masquerade as "big." Originally they called this maneuver "KKK" or "'Knome, Knome, Knome'" but as time went on, the practice spread to big people who themselves wore sun-far sheets and adopted the KKK name, adapting it to their own purposes. Such were the *knomes*, buteness toward big people that many used the KKK guise to spread mischief and hatred among humans.

WHY GNOMES WEAR HATS

Here, for the first time, actual photographic evidence makes clear what before could only be speculated upon: Gnomes make use of the unique shape of their heads in many ways, not the least of which can be found in their mating rituals—but here we must draw the curtain of privacy.





The Star...The Woman...The Torment

A 9-by 12 book with 150 photographs — 40 in full color.
From the Twentieth Century-Fox film opening in November
starring Bette Midler, Alan Bates, and Fredric Forrest.



The time, 1969, the height of the hippie era. Out of all the turmoil, "The Rose" is making her mark in the world as the queen of Rock and Roll, her music symbolizes the time. But something is missing from her life. She isn't satisfied with sex, and booze only deadens the pain for a while. She is at the pinnacle of her career, dressed

in trash flash, a child in a woman's body, looking for acceptance, security, and love.

When you get to know The Rose, you'll feel her pain, know her loneliness, and want to wrap her up in the protective cocoon of your heart. You'll get a firsthand look at what it's like at the top from a lady who's there and comes crashing down.

Twenty First Century Communications
Dept. 1279
635 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Send me _____ copies of *The Rose*
at \$6.95 each.

Please add 75¢ per order for postage and handling in the US, \$1.00 for shipments anywhere else in the world. New York residents please add 8% sales tax.

I enclose \$_____ in check or money order payable to Twenty First Century Communications.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____, State _____

Zip _____

A word of warning...



Thirteen never-before-seen color photographs from the hit movie *Alien* to tingle the imagination every month of 1980.

January



Heavy Metal Books, Dept. 1279
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New York, NY 10022

Please send me _____ copies of the 1980 *Alien* Calendar at \$3.50 each.
New York City residents, please add 8 percent sales tax. Add 75¢ per calendar for postage and handling.

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or check or money order payable to Heavy Metal Books.

Name _____

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If you do not wish to print, use the non-permanent ink on the back of the card.

December 24th
11:55 P.M.







Lost Lands, Mythical Kingdoms, and Unknown Worlds

by Val Warren

This book is for those who are growing old without growing up—who have a lingering taste for the unexpected and exotic. It's an excursion into the realm of cinematic fantasy—through wondrous worlds of fairies and monsters, jungle lords and star lords, shadow lands and golden kingdoms...a trip to the fabulous and imaginary universe called the movies.



A must for all collectors!
A selection of 300 black and white stills—science fiction, fantasy, and adventure films—many never before seen in print. From Skull Island to Emerald City, *Nosferatu* to *The Thief of Bagdad*, Buster Crabbe to Hedy Lamarr...and much more. Something for everyone!

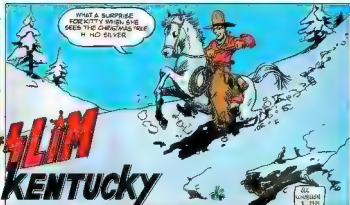
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635 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022

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Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____



SLIM GETS READY FOR
A LONG NIGHT

"MC
SILVER"

SLIM HOLDS FOR SILVER, HEARS WHEN

WHAT'S
THAT LIGHT?

CURIOUS, HE
RAPIDLY CLIMBS
THE HILL TO
DISCOVER THE
LIGHT SOURCE.
"AN INDIAN
CAMP? HE
REALIZES TO
HIMSELF, FOR
THIS IS SOME-
THING HE HAD
NEVER SEEN
HERE UNTIL
TODAY"

SILVER IT WAS
THE INDIANS WHO
BROKE HIM

SLIM PREPARES TO
RECAPTURE HIS LOYAL
HORSE WHEN A
SHINING LIGHT IN THE
SKY ATTRACTS HIS
ATTENTION

CHRISTMAS! HE HAD ALMOST
FORGOTTEN THAT IT WAS
CHRISTMAS EVE. IN ONE
BRIEF INSTANT HE REMEM-
BERED THE CHRISTMAS OF HIS
CHILDHOOD AND HOW HE'D
WANT ANYONE TONIGHT, EVEN
IF THEY'RE REDSKINS.

"JUST THEN A
BRILLIANT IDEA
CAME TO HIM"

"GODS ARE
FOR NOT BEING
WITH ME TONIGHT"

THE GUNSLINGER #3

WHAT IS SLIM DOING
BEHIND THE TREE?



HERE'S THE ANSWER



HEY
I'M
ST NICK

FOR THE INDIANS, THIS WAS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL
CHRISTMAS IN THE WORLD! THEIR SIMPLE SAVAGE
SPIRITS KNEW HOW TO SAVOR THE TRUE VALUE
OF THE COMMUNAL JOYS OF CHRISTMAS EVE PEACE.



THAT NIGHT THE
INDIAN CAMP
SLEPT IN CALM
AND JOY



CAN IT BE? YOU
SURELY RECOGNIZED
SLIM AND INSTANTLY
DISGUISED AS ST NICK



THE NEXT MORNING, SLIM, BET-
TER ACCUSTOMED TO THE EFFECTS
OF ALCOHOL, Woke UP FIRST AFTER
STARTING THE FIRE. HE FLED
WITH SILVER. NO ONE GETS
AWAY WITH STEALING SILVER
AS FOR KITTY, SHE NEVER-
THELESS HAD A GOOD
CHRISTMAS EVE TEXAS
KID WAS WITH HER

GOODBYE
SILVER



END

LUC CORNILLON
MAY 1978

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-OFFER-

FROM HEAVY METAL BUY 2-GET ANY 2 FREE!

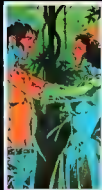
SO BEAUTIFUL AND SO DANGEROUS

by Angus McKie

The first existential science fiction comic story—drawn in the exquisite detail McKie perfected in *Spacecraft*: 2000 to 2100 A.D. — traces the adventures and antics of an oddball collection of intergalactic hitchhikers aboard the most stunning space vehicle ever conceived. Humor and high drama combine to create a unique fantasy package, previewed in *Heavy Metal*, McKie's debut in illustrated storytelling! Sixty-four color pages, with a special introduction by *Heavy Metal* Editor Sean Kelly. 8½×11 trade paperback. List price: \$6.95.

MORE THAN HUMAN

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BY CHRISTMAS, THE FOG HAD BEEN SQUATTING OVER LONDON FOR WEEKS, ERODING THE SPIRITS OF THE SEASON THEN, ON THE AFTERNOON OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH, THE STORM CAME, BUT HOWEVER THE STORM AND THE FOG AFFECTED THE SPIRITS OF OTHERS, IT DIDN'T MATTER ONE WHIT TO ME FOR I KNEW CAROL WAS WAITING FOR ME



SEEKING SHELTER, I ABANDONED THE BROAD AVENUES FOR THE NARROW BACK ALLEYS, WHERE LONDON'S FACADE OF MERCHANT STREETS GIVES WAY TO CRUMBING WALLS AND SINKING TENEMENTS



AS I EXPECTED
THEY WERE NOW
DESERTED

ALMOST

I WOULD HAVE IGNORED THE INHUMAN WHINE AND THE OUTSTRETCHED HAND BUT PERHAPS IT WAS THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS THAT MOVED ME. I REFUSED HIS REQUEST FOR SILVER AND INSTEAD COURTEOUSLY DEMANDED THAT HE ACCOMPANY ME HOME



WHERE HE WOULD RECEIVE A
HOT MEAL



SUNDAY

Christmas
Carol

APPROACHING OUR RESIDENCE, I CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF CAROL AT THE WINDOW. IT WAS EASY TO SEE THAT SHE WAS EXPECTING ONLY ME.



HAD I ONLY NOTICED THE PROFANE STARE THAT RAVAGED CAROL'S BODY



WE WERE AWAKE WHEN THE RAIN TURNED INTO SNOW, AND AGAIN WHEN NIGHT LIFTED ITS VEIL LIKE A SCULPTOR REVEALING HIS LATEST WORK. LONDON HAD BEEN SILENTLY REMADE, BUT THOUGH PRESENTING ITSELF IN NO DAY DRESS, IT STILL EXACTED THE SAME RITUAL FROM ALL BUT THE WEALTHIEST OF ITS POPULATION, AMONG WHOM I WAS NOT ONE.

RELUCTANTLY I FORCED MYSELF OUT OF BED (DISENTANGLING MYSELF FROM CAROL'S ARMS) AND GOT DRESSED FOR WORK.

JUST A FEW MINUTES LATER I WAS OUT THE DOOR. I PERSUADED UPON CAROL TO ALLOW OUR GUEST THE LUXURY OF THE SOFA FOR A FEW MORE HOURS.

GIVE HIM A FEW SHILLINGS WHEN HE WAKES, MY PET, AND THEN SEND HIM ON HIS WAY.

GOOD-BYE.

IF ONLY I HAD FORGOTTEN SOMETHING.

OOHHHHH
KEEP AWAY

JUST BY SOME STROKE OF LUCK TO HAVE FORGOTTEN SOME PAPERS, OR PERHAPS POCKET CHANGE.

NO!
PLEASE
DON'T!
OH!

BLURRRR



HAVING RUSHED THROUGH AN WORK I WAS ON MY WAY HOME AS I HURRIED THROUGH THE SNOW-COVERED STREETS, NOW COULD I HAVE KNOWN THAT THE IMAGES OF THE NIGHT BEFORE HAD BEEN BRUTALLY DISPLACED FROM HER MIND. ALL I WOULD KNOW IS WHAT SHE HERSELF WOULD TELL ME WHEN I ARRIVED HOME.

FOR REASONS OF HER OWN, SHE CHOSE TO HIDE HER VIOLATION

I COULD SEE THAT SHE WAS UPSET BUT I COULD NOT PERCEIVE THE HORRORS THAT HAD TRANSPIRED?



HOW WAS YOUR DAY, DEAR?

WELL THEN, SHALL WE SIT BY THE FIRE?



BUT SHE DIDN'T COME NOR DID THINGS EVER REALLY RETURN TO NORMAL. IN THE MONTHS THAT FOLLOWED SHE TOOK TO BROODING IN SILENCE. INSTEAD OF NIGHTS AT HOME THERE WERE EVENINGS AT THE THEATER AND IT WAS THERE THAT SHE TOLD ME

I WENT TO SEE THE DOCTOR AGAIN LAST WEEK

THE PAINS AGAIN?

YES, I SUPPOSE BUT THAT'S NOT ALL

SOMETHING ELSE TOO?

WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A BABY



AN JOY WAS SOON REPLACED BY APPREHENSION. THE CHILD WAS DUE IN SEPTEMBER

BUT IN OCTOBER, AFTER TWO MONTHS OF BEDRIPPEN PAIN AND SEVERAL FALSE LABORS, WE WERE STILL WAITING

FINALLY, THE YEAR DREW TO A CLOSE. ON CHRISTMAS EVE, THE DOCTOR ARRIVED IN RESPONSE TO MY URGENT MESSAGE!



NOVEMBER CAME AND WENT

AND GET ME SOME CLEAN TOWELS!

AND HURRY!



BOIL SOME WATER

I WAITED DOWNSTAIRS, AL-
MOST AFRAID THAT THE
CHILD MIGHT FINALLY BE
BORN, HOPING THAT THIS
PERHAPS WAS ANOTHER
FALSE ALARM. WITH
THESE FEARS I WAITED



AT FIRST
CAROL'S ROBS

BUT THEN ALL WENT
SILENT

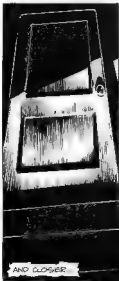


I WAITED FOR THE CRY
OF A NEWBORN CHILD,
BUT MY EXPECTATIONS
WERE BETRAYED AND
MY FEARS NURTURED

I WALKED TO THE FOOT OF
THE STAIRS TO LISTEN
MORE CLOSELY. STILL
SILENCE



I WAS HARDLY AWARE OF
CLIMBING THE STAIRS.
INSTEAD, IT WAS THE DOOR
THAT SEEMED TO BE
MOVING CLOSER TO ME



AND CLOSER



MY TREMBLING HAND
FLUMBED WITH THE LOCK,
WHICH YIELDED A TINY
CRACK THROUGH WHICH
I BAGERIN PIERCED
IT WAS THEN THAT I
SAW

THE ROOM ROSE BEFORE ME THE FLOOR TILTING MADLY UNTIL I WAS SURE I WOULD FALL BACKWARDS INTO SOME ENDLESS ABYSS THAT YAWNED OPEN BEHIND ME VIOLATED BEYOND REASON, TRANSPORTED BY HORROR MY SENSES WERE REELING WHAT I SAW WOULD HAVE MADE BLINDNESS A BLESSING INSANITY A SALVATION BUT IT WAS TOO LATE FOR BLINDNESS OR INSANITY ONLY DEATH ITSELF COULD HAVE STRUCK THE MAGE FROM MY BRAIN SERPENTINE LEECHES SUMMONED INTO BEING BY THE WRETCHED NIGHTMARES OF SOME BEFOOLED AND BEFOULING FEND CLUNG TO THE GLISTENING FORM OF MY DEAR EXHAUSTED WIFE THE MEAT WAS UNBEARABLE MY CLOTHES STUCK TO ME LIKE SLIME I WAS NAUSEOUS UNBALANCED BEFORE ME TO THE RIGHT THE DOCTOR LAY IN HIS OWN BLOOD SILENT AND STILL HIS EYES STILL OPEN TO THE HORROR OF HIS OWN DEATH





I WANTED TO BEG AND PLEAD, TO ABJECTLY SURRENDER TO D'S. WHEN SHE SPOKE AGAIN I SCREAMED





IT WAS WHEN THE FLOOR SLAMMED INTO MY BACK THAT I REALIZED I HAD FALLEN.



TINY FINGERS WITH NAILS LIKE NEEDLES CLAIMED AT MY LIPS AND EYELIDS. AND THEN I SAW THE LAMP.



MY ARMS RAILED WILDLY IN ALL DIRECTIONS, THE LAMP A BURNING BLUDGEON THAT SMASHED AND SCORCHED THE VICIOUS SPAWN THEY FLED BEFORE MY MINDLESS FURY BUT I COULD NOT KILL THEM ALL



AN INSANE STRENGTH FURGED THROUGH MY LIMBS



THROUGH THE GAPING WINDOW, THEY ESCAPED INTO THE SNOWY NIGHT



WHEN IT WAS OVER, CAROL WAS LEFT HORRIBLY BURNED AND DEAD



WHAT MEANING COULD LIFE HOLD FOR ME AFTER WHAT I HAD SEEN AND DONE? DEATH WOULD BE MY SALVATION



BUT THEN, I REALIZED THEY WERE FREE! AND AS CAROL'S CHILDREN, THEY WOULD GIVE ME A REASON TO LIVE



THEY WERE FREE, BUT MY LUST FOR VENGEANCE WOULD GROW AND RIPEN WITH THEM. IN THE BIBLE IT IS SAID THE VOWS OF THE FAITHFUL COULD MAKE THE RULERS OF HELL TREMBLE. BUT ALL THESE VOWS WOULD PALE BEFORE MY OWN.

AND NO DEVIL WOULD EVER HAVE MORE TO FEAR OF RIGHTEOUS FURY THAN THESE SPAWN WOULD HAVE TO FEAR OF MY OWN

THE END

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Lt. T. Armageddonwith That Plan in

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